

Research integrity: What does it mean in everyday research practice?

- **Max. Number of Participants:** 25
- **Time and Place:** 21.11.2018 13:00-17:30, 22.11.2018 09:00-18:00
HS 26.K3 (H31.0.U1.210), Heinrichstraße 31, 8010 Graz
- **Lecturer:** [Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ulrike Felt](#)
- **Content:** In today's research we increasingly encounter concerns about research integrity issues and that this might shake not only public trust, but also cause problems for the research system itself. Transgressions of what is seen as good scientific practice (GSP) — be it fraud, plagiarism, fabrication or embellishment of data or diverse other kinds of violations of the norms of science such as authorship arrangements or informed consent — have by now become a widespread matter of concern in scientific communities, for science policy makers, but also in the public space. They also connect to discussion on reproducibility of scientific results and the complexity of contemporary publication systems. Discussions on research integrity take place in many locations from academic journals, over professional associations, academic institutions, funding agencies and science policy makers on national and supranational levels to mass media and numerous blogs. But we also see a growing number of workshops and courses — like the one you join — which aim at sensitizing participants to research integrity and what it might mean in practice and at addressing the challenges related to it. A core concern is that these transgressions of GSP might not only cause a decline in public trust in science and scientific expertise more generally, but also disrupt the trust relations so essential to the making of scientific knowledge.

But what are these norms on which science rests? Who defines them and how did they change over time? Should we be concerned about the alleged rise of transgressions? How are norms transmitted to the new generations entering research? (How) Are they visible in the everyday life of researchers? And, what happens when these norms are transgressed?

In this workshop we will investigate — through a mixture of lectures, case studies and hands-on practical exercises — how under contemporary conditions in research (e.g. high competition, mobility, speed of knowledge production, project organization, large scale collaborations across institutions, ...) issues of respecting good scientific practice come up in everyday contexts and how they are dealt with. In doing so, we will both look into international debates but also into the specific institutional, field related and local context, i.e. an Austrian

University and the field of life sciences/biomedicine. The basic aim is to think of research integrity not as a set of rules to follow, but much more understand it as part of a research culture which needs to be established and nourished.

- **Objective (Expected Results of Study and Acquired Competences):** The course should lead students
 - to better understand the values and norms that should guide their research (focus on biomedical and life sciences); this includes reflecting on their historical development;
 - to develop higher sensibilities towards GSP and to grasp the importance of these values and norms during the conduct of their research
 - to recognize and reflect the complexities of the circumstances they find themselves in everyday research
 - to understand the importance of carrying out research that is reproducible and reliable and to appreciate the many factors that go into conducting rigorous research
 - to question their own and others' potential biases or misjudgements
 - to anticipate the consequences of transgressions and the effects of their actions on others.
- **Teaching and Learning Method (Transfer of Skills, Workload for Students):** Through a series of shorter lectures, small group discussions as well as of hands-on practical exercises this course provides information and insights on important tenets and topics that contemporary institutions of research consider essential to the responsible conduct of research. We will start with a case story of a major fraud case in your field and collectively engage in an "autopsy of the case". As the case evolves over time, we will identify important moments of transgressions of norms, we will look into how these cases were handled and reported about and we will discuss the dilemmas that become visible through the case. This will then also allow us to re-read the formal norms, as spelled out by the students' institution (rules of good scientific practice) and reflect why they are formulated the way they are and what problem zones they address.
Therefore, the most important element of learning will be an active engagement of students along the two days of the workshop. It is not only about knowing about the norms of research in one's field. The aim of the workshop is above all about understanding why norms exist, what functions they serve, how they matter in practice, but also how we might identify and address dilemmas researchers find themselves in.
- **Recommended reading:** A short reading list will be sent to students once they are inscribed.
- **Registration for the workshop:** office@biotechmedgraz.at